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The Philosophy Of Theology: The Existence of God in Human's Life

Ridha Ahida¹

Abstract--- *This research discusses the Philosophy of Theology used to uncover the existence of God in human's life. The object of the research are basically the perceptions of the ancients Greece, Christians and Muslims philosophers on the existence of God in human's life. The research employs divinity philosophical approach to uncover how the ancients Greece, Christians and Muslims philosophers perceive the existence of God in human's life. Divinity philosophical approach is used to describe the existence of God in human's life and the relationship between mankind and God according to the ancients Greece, Christians and Muslims philosophers. The findings revealed that the discussions about the existence of God by the philosophers have been around since 600 BC. Some of the most intersecting topics on divinity among philosophers are; the existence of God; the creation of the entire world and mankind; the position of God after the creation; what and who God(s) are; proofs that God exists, and the relationship between faith and ratio. Implicitly, the first seed on problem related to divinity were found on the early statements of philosophers related to the "arche" "prime matter" of the universe. The existence of God was not supposed to be literally and dogmatically accepted, it was supposed to be given a rational explanation. The understanding of the existence of God cannot be separated from the widely accepted views of the philosophers at certain time. Innovation and the emergence of originality of ideas related to the concept of divinity from the philosophers have also said to be play an important role on influencing how community perceive the existence of God during the life period of the philosophers and after it.*

Keywords--- *Major Principle, Major Cause, The Permanent And The Change, The One And The Many.*

¹ Ridha Ahida, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bukittinggi, email: ridhaahida@iainbukittinggi.ac.id

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of life called “philosophy” is the result of two factors, first the religion passed on to the next generation and ethical concepts, second scientific investigation. Those two factors, up to certain level, become the characteristics of philosophy. Philosophy is something that is considered as the continuation of theology and knowledge [1]. Nature, human and God somehow become the subject matter of “thinkers” of all time. Probably, it has been the destiny of human no to feel satisfy to all the realities he has been through. With his rational ability, human, forced by his curiosity, is eager to find something far and near, the immanent and the transcendent, the simple, the complicated and the abstract, the single and the plural. In other words, human wants to reach every ting that his rational might never encounter. Human never finds out the limit of his rationality absolutely and certainly. For human in this sense, limited or not is both meaningful and meaningless respectively.

Philosophy, as far as it concern, is an attempt to think rationally, critically, reflectively, speculatively and argumentatively that has no useless meaning. Why is it not? The philosophers along the journey of the history who probably realize that the solution they offered to sole a problem is never come to the end, yet they never stop thinking and this condition will continue for the whole time. Even if sometimes it looks strange because as the human himself, the philosophers never get to realize is completely, but why they still want to reach something “far”, and even furthest of him, that is God. Whatever happens, the philosophers have the right and obligation to analyze critically thing that he should be responsible for, no matter whether it is a faith, that is to say that God exists. The philosophers have no right to decide the subject he analyze using the priory dogmatic point of view.

The discussion about God done by the philosophers starts 600 years before the century up to now. The analysis based on historical perspective is important to understand the subject matter and the solution once offered by the philosophers before we are able to propose a more appropriate and suitable solution. In this sense, philosophy is not out of history. We will be able to see how philosophical person gives colors and nuance to his country and his time through history. As Bertrand Russell has mentioned ”to understand an era or a nation, we have to understand its philosophy and to understand the philosophy up to certain point, we must be a philosopher”. God matters that attract the philosophers are : the existence of God, the creation of the world, human and things in it, the position of God after the creation, what and who is God or the evidences of His existence and the relationship between faith and ratio[2]

II. STUDY RESULTS, SUMMARY AND CONTRIBUTION

A. The View of Ancient Greek Philosophers about God

The philosophers at that time are trying to explain the first principle of the universe. Implicitly maybe, the first problem seed of Godness can be found in the statement of the philosophers about “*arche*”, “prime matter” of this universe. Even Thales proposed that “all things are full of Gods”. The search of the first principle is then continued with the discussion about the stay still and the changing, the single and the plural (the one and the many)[3]

After a while, the Sufis arises that starts to come up with their atheism seed: “with regard to the gods, I can not full sure that they are not what they are like in figure, for there are many things that hinder knowledge, the obscurity of the subject and the shortness of human life. Man is the measure of all things, of things that are that they are, and of things that are not that they are not”. Then Socrates appears with his followers that concentrate more to the problem of human (microcosmic). Plato is the first known philosopher who speaks about God explicitly, followed by Aristotle and Plotinos as the figure of Neo Platonism. These three well-known philosophers, the latest born in Egypt, can be considered as the next generation to continue the tradition of Greek’s Philosophy, is very influential for Islam or Christian thinkers who discuss about God.

a. God according to Plato (428 -348 BC)

God for Plato is The One and only, The Unlimited Substance, the source of unity and plurality in the world. The creator, ideas, “goodness” who overcome the destiny and power, the indescribable ultimate principle. Plato disbelieve in Gods who give punishments or commit immoral action. He also disbelieve in God who give rewards to those who pray, who gives offerings and other forms of worship. Religion is important and needed so that the society becomes a good one because religion gives a high position to the values of life. Good and evil can only be differentiated by assuming the existence of God. The universe as the cosmic and not the chaos because of the smart and purposeful soul and this soul is presumed as the reality of goodness that is none other than God[4]

God the creator does not create this world out of himself. God is like the painter who wants to reveal his vision on the canvas and uses the best material available in His hands. He mixes mortality and immortality. Since material somehow always gives resistance to the work of the spirit, the world created will contain imperfectness in it. Besides, the work of the creator is limited by the freedom to choose between the good and evil that has become the characteristics of human soul.

For Plato, the struggle to fight the evil is identical to the effort to fight something that we do not know, and for this effort human needs a feeling of loyalty and obedience to the goodness that is the function of religion. The worship to the God is needed for the life goodness in this world, not for the merit that in life after the human experiences death. Plato believes in the eternity of soul. Ideas that become the standard of perfectness may not be derived from experience limited on the objects that up to certain level contain imperfectness. The ideas arise in human thought is eternal and recalled from the previous existence. Since the ideas are in their souls, the soul is the immortal. Human body consists of vulnerable material, but the soul contains in it will not be destroyed. The soul leaves the body after the process of death and enters the other form of existence. Human body serves as the cage for the soul while death serves as the release of the soul[5]

b. God according to Aristotle (384- 322 BC)

Aristotle approaches the problem of God from the old riddle about movement, how does it start? Aristotle does not accept the possibility that movement is not without a start as well as he understand material, material is not eternal because it is only an eternal possibility of future forms. However, how and when do the movement and the formation start that in the end fulfill the universe with unlimited forms? It must have one source and if we cannot refer back to the unlimited background, we must place one first unmoved movement (*primum mobile inmotum*), the bodiless creator, undivided, go beyond space and time, having no sex, passionless, unchanged, perfect and eternal[6]

God does not create, yet He moves the world and moves it not because of the mechanical power but because of the total motive of the whole world operation. God moves the world as the object who is loved and is moved by the lover. He is the formal cause of the nature, the force and the purpose of every thing, the form of the world, the total amount of ability and its vital process, the inherent purpose of its growth, the entelechy (purpose) that gives power to every thing. He is the pure energy, *actus purus*, the per se activity.

For Aristotle, God is a conscious spirit, a mysterious spirit. God never does every thing, passionless, not having any willingness, no purpose. He is pure activity and therefore has no activity. He is perfect and absolute, so He never has to move something, therefore He is nothing. His job is only thinking about the essence of everything and since He himself is the essence of everything, the form of everything, His job is only thinking about Himself. God for Aristotle is the “*roi fainéant*”, a do nothing king, the king reigns, but he does not rule”[7]

c. God according to Plotinus (205- 270 M)

Plotinus is the figure of Neoplatonism. He is famous for his proof about the existence of God and his theory of emanation. For Plotinus, God and material are two poles of the universe. God is the active power, while material is a passive receiver. Since material does not have reality through himself, therefore, there is only highest principle and that is God. Although God is only one, He is not one in a numeric sense that can be divided into parts. God is the source of every thing that exists, yet not a particular one [8]

God does not have a will or think in a human sense of these words. God goes beyond the will and thought since He is not limited by what He does not know or things He does not want. God is free and untied. To determine a certain quality on God is like placing a limitation upon His destiny. In short, even we do not say that God exists because He goes beyond every limited existence.

Although God is more than just human who can think, thinking is an unavoidable media to be able to reach the gate of protection that from that place, human enters mystical thing through Godness. According to Plotinus, the universe emanates from God like the heat and the light emanates from a central. The closer it is to the fire, the heat and the fire will get bigger. The further it is from the fire, the heat and the light will be lessened. When the distance gets further from fire, the light and the fire will disappear. The same thing also goes in its relationship with its closeness or it distance from God[9]

B. Christian Philosophers’ Point of View of God

Like the Islamic philosophers in the middle ages, the influence of Greek’s philosophy is also very dominant for the Christian philosophers. Christian philosophers appear especially to give rational arguments to the teaching in the Bible. In the Christian philosophers’ perspective, ratio does not confront the faith. The existence of God should not be accepted dogmatically or literally. In contrast, a clear explanation will have to be given. In this case indeed, the purpose of Islam and Christian philosophers is quite similar. The following are opinions from several well-known Christian philosophers in relation to the problem of God.

a. God according to Agustinus (354-430M)

The existence of God is proven not by looking at the outside, but by looking at the inside. Agustinus states that when human looks at the inside, he will be certain with his own existence. He not only exists, but also knows that he exists. He will feel the same certainty as the truth of mathematics and logic. He knows that two plus two equals to four and he also knows that something may not exists or non-exists at the same time. However, before finding out about the truth, we must find out about God first because God is the truth. God is also the beauty and the goodness because all of these are known in the same way. God is in Himself and is the foundation of every thing that exists.

God is the absolute creator, the One reality. He is beyond our understanding because He is bigger than something we know or experience. He is the eternal, the one that never changes. The world He created is transitory, changing and insufficient related to the complete reality. In order to find out that the unchanging thing is real and the changing thing is insufficient in reality, faith and ratio must work together. "*Credo ut intelligum*" is the way used by Agustinus to reveal his belief that we must trust in order to get knowledge. God is personalized, thinking and has a will. He creates the world and control it according to the divine plan He already stated. God creates the "*ex nihilo*" world[10]

b. God according to Anselmus (1033-1109M)

In Anselmus point of view, God is not more than just the Highest Creator of every thing. God can only be known in the faith. In order to find God, a person has to involve himself in God. If we do not have a faith, we will not understand God. "I involve myself so I understand," "I have a faith so I understand," The existence of God can be proven rationally, that is by using the ontological argument. God for him is "something that other than something bigger cannot be thought about." God must exist because without existence, God will not be perfect. Having an existence will make it perfect than having no existence at all[11]

c. God according to Thomas Aquinas (1255-1274M)

Our knowledge about God implied that He is the only absolute creator, immobile and unchanged; therefore, He is not passive or even owns material. He is the first cause of everything, but He has no cause. He is the last perfection, norms of truth, beauty and goodness. He is the designer of the universe rules and principles, giver and smart director. All of these are implied in the concept of God. However, although we know that He exists, we never know the essence or the real Him .

Although we do not have a direct and perfect knowledge about the essence of Godly, we are not completely blind of God's characteristics. We also do not base all of them on faith so that we understand the genuine destiny. There are two ways of getting insight of him. First, negatively, second analogically. Since God is an unlimited creator, we may find out that He in any way is not like any other creature. We can say that God does not exist, even if we cannot say how exists he is. We may say that He is free form arrangements of parts. He is not the subject of change. He is not good in the sense of words that we use and he is not thing or particular quality limited by discrete condition [12]

The knowledge through analogy is based upon similarity. Although God is not like other creature who is limited in any way, He still has several similarities as them. It happens due to the fact that He is the cause of everything and the result of that undoubtedly has several similarities as its cause. Based on this point, we may talk to God as a persona, as long as we understand the terms used in metaphoric sense. He does not have any limitation owned by human, yet He is equal to persona more than any other limited thing. It is in this sense that we may say about His justice, goodness and truth.

The existence of God is identical to its essence. It is not like human essence that not only includes essence, but also a coincidence quality. For example, humanity is the essence of particular human, but every individual has his own uniqueness that differentiates him from other persona. It is because human is a creature created from different parts that give possibility for his essence. God is the only creator who has no possibility to develop further. Since God is the creator that is able to think about His fair action, His intellectuality moves His will and its consequences. He only knows something He knows well. The teaching about, "primacy of the intellect," conveys the important consequences for the philosophers. It conveys the meaning that all God's activity makes sense and right for human to look for any reason as far as they can do it [13]

C. The Moslem Philosophers' View of God

Philosophy is known by Moslem community after they start a relationship with the Greeks. After the works of the Greeks' philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle are translated into Arabic, Moslem philosophers emerge in Arabic peninsula and the area around it. Moreover, the special characteristics of philosophical thought of the Arabic thinkers, except certain thinkers, can be expressed as follows[14]

1. The influence of Greek's thought, especially Plato and Aristotle and Plotinus mystical thought is very dominant, the values taught in Al-Qur'an, especially the values of Godness is so influential in the variety of their thought.
2. The Moslem philosophers thought that ratio does not confront the religious faith. Rationalism is a form of understanding upon the developing religion. Philosophy is viewed as the road to God.
3. The Moslem philosophers do not wish to eliminate religion, however, they only want to clear religion from primitive and parochial substances.
4. Philosophers are people who believe in religion and viewed the vision of prophecy as higher than the vision and insight of philosophy. Qur'an is always the reference of their thought.
5. Philosophy, religion and mystical support each other. philosophy is used as the media to give an explanation rationally over religious propositions, especially those that are related to the problem of God. In this sense, philosophy serves religion. Mystic is another way taken by philosophers when he does not feel satisfy with the philosophical arguments, especially those that are related to the proof of God's existence. With mystic, they may have a direct experience that God is the certain creator.

6. Philosophy among Moslems can be very elitics. Only a few part of Moslem, especially educated people and those who have certain level of intelligence that deserve to study philosophy. There is an anxiety among them. Philosophy for many people can cause misunderstanding and therefore, may distract their faith.

a. God according to Yaqub ibn Ishaq Al Kindi (w. 866 M)

Al Kindi can be considered as the father of Islamic philosophy. His association with intellectual movement such as MuktaZillah makes hem attempts to integrate Greek's philosophy with Islamic teaching that is experiencing its bloom over the whole imperium of Islam in the ninth century. As the first Moslem who uses the rational method for Qur'an, he perceives Qur'an as the server of revelation. Knowledge that is inspired by the prophets always goes beyond insight that only has humanist characteristics according to the philosophers. For him, the truth is only one, the duty of philosophers is to look for it in the culture or in any language[15]

Al Kindi uses Aristotle's argument to prove the existence of the first mover. In one rational world, everything has its cause. Even so, he believes in the teaching of *creatio ex nihilo* according to the teaching of Qur'an. The *creatio ex nihilo* is a special privilege owns by God. God is the only Substance (exists) that is able to create from the non-exist, and He is the real cause of all activities that we can see around us

b. God according to Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakaria Ar Razi (w. 930 M)

Ar Razi refuses Aristotle metaphysic; he follows the Gnostic belief, seeing creation as the creation of one demiurge. He might be the free thinker who first finds the concept of God that confronts the scientific view. According to him, only ratio can direct to trutXh. Basing ourself upon the revelation teaching is useless, because religion is not approved. Most people according to him, are not able to think philosophically and therefore, trapped in mistakes and chaos. Philosophy only takes the attention of people with certain IQ and people who confront the spirit of egalitarian that begins to color the Islamic society [16]

c. God according to Abu Nasr Al Farabi (879-950 M)

Al Farabi is considered as the founder of the authentic philosophy and shows the interesting universality of Islamic ideal, he is the human of renaissance. He is also one of the philosophers who follows Neoplatonism. According to him, Prophet Muhammad is the leader as well as described by Plato in Republic. Muhammad as the messenger of eternal truths in an imaginative forms understood by all Moslems is as ideal as Plato's ideal society. Shiah with their wise Imam is the society suitable to Plato's description. Revelation is a truly natural process. God is the first of everything (as well as God according to Aristotle and Plotinos). God does not directly decide to create the world, if so He will be eternal and static[17]

d. God according to Abu Yaqub Al Sijistani (w. 971M)

According to Al Sijistani, Moslems often talk about God anthromorphically, making Him bigger than the living human, while others dry Him out of the whole meaning of religiosity and reduce God with one concept. He defends the way to call with double negatives to refer to God. We have to call God negatively, for example that He is the 'non being' that is more than just 'being', 'not ignorant' that is more than just 'wise'. Nevertheless, we have to directly negate with abstract and non living negation, for example that God is 'not not ignorant' or that He is 'not no being' by making ourselves used to that words. By the use of this repeated linguistic discipline, our soul will be aware of the lack of language when it wants to deliver the mystery of God[18]

e. God according to Abu Ali Ibn Sina (980 – 1037M)

Philosophy reaches its peak in Ibn Sina (Avicena). According to him, philosophy has to make the statement about the presence of complete reality alive. He has to make the belief of lay people more meaningful that even though people choose to interpret it, is the main fact of political, personal and social life. Ibn Sina states that a Prophet like Muhammad is higher than philosophers for he does not depend on human ratio yet having a direct knowledge and intuitive of God. It is similar to the mystical experience of the Sufis and that Plotinus has explained as the highest wisdom. However, it does not mean that intellectuality cannot make God meaningful[19]

Ibn Sina is showing a rational proof about the existence of God that bases on Aristotle proof that has become real among the philosophers in the Middle Age either in Judaism or in Islam. They never doubt that human ratio without help will reach the knowledge about the existence of the Highest substance. Ratio is the noblest activity of human; it is part of goodness ratio and clearly has important part in religious investigation. Ibn Sina perceives it as the religious obligation of people who has intellectual capacity to find God for himself because ratio can clear the conception of God and free him from the superstition and anthromorphism. At the same time as the thinkers in his era, Ibn Sina wants to use the ratio to find the essence of God, as far as they can do it.

According to Ibn sina, everything that we experience has the start and whatever it is that has a start must have a cause. One thing that has one cause is one possible creator. The cause of the possible creator must have caused by something and there it goes repeatedly without limit. Since there is no series of unlimited cause, therefore, there must be the first and that is God. It is possible for us to conceptualize one essence without knowing that it exists in the reality. We

can think of a class of object even if the class does not have any member in its actual existence. Existence does not contain in the essence of things. The only exception is God, since for Him, essence is identical with existence. For human, or universalia, essence exists in intellectuality, but in physical world, essence exists in particular things.

Creation is an eternal process because God is always in act that is the continuous expression of His destiny. Therefore, His creation is eternal and certain. In this case, Ibn Sina agrees with Aristotle because he does not believe in the world that is created in time. In his epistemology, Ibn Sina makes further difference between possible intellect and intellect agent. With this way, he expect to be able to explain the difference between ideas in human thought and the truth in its pure form is in God's. for this, he uses the theory of Neoplatonic emanation[20]

From God, the source of all truth, who is the existence of Godness intelligence, and from this intelligence, the sequences appear and reach human thought. All of this shows that human thought is not the source of truth but more likely as a media to receive one higher source. The intellect may be able to accept ideas so far. The truth in God'd thought is absolute and unchangeable. Yet, in human thought, it is known through media of organic senses and it can explain the variations exist in a way that makes people satisfy.

f. God according to Abu Hamid Al Ghazali (1058-1111M)

Al Ghazali realizes as well as the modern skeptical society does that the certainty is a psychological condition that is not completely objective. The philosophers state that reaching a certainty needs a certain kind of understanding and rational arguments. The mystical state that they have found it through sufi. The ismailiah feel that it can only be found in the teaching of their imam. Yet, the reality we call "God" is not tested empirically, therefore, what should we do so that we are sure that our belief is not only imaginary?

More conventional rational evidences have failed fulfilling the strict Al Ghazali standard. According to Al Ghazali, philosophy is not satisfying at all. If philosophy limits itself toward worldly detected phenomenon like the science of medical or mathematics, it will be very useful, yet, it cannot say anything to us about God. The philosophers, according to him, are irrational and philosophical for looking for knowledge beyond their capability and are not verified through senses[21]

Al Ghazali finds that mystical discipline results a direct and intuitive feeling of something considered as God. In his point of view, the religiosity experience is the only way to verify the realities beyond human intellectual and is a cerebral process too. Sufi's knowledge about God is neither a rational nor a mystical knowledge, it is clearly close to the intuitive experience of the prophets in the ancient era. Therefore, the Sufis find the essential truth of Islam for themselves by bringing their central experience back to live.

Like Ibn Sina, Al Ghazali shifts his attention to the ancient belief toward archetive world outside the world of senses. This world is a replica that has a lower position compared to what we call Platonic Intelligence world. Human are surrounded by two kinds of real world; he has the physical and spiritual world because God has put His Godness in it. In Ghazali's point of view, human ratio enlightens something. It is not only that he has the probability to perceive objects, but also goes beyond space and time. Thus, he takes part in reak or spiritual world.

Al Ghazali describes mystical knowledge as one consciousness that only the creator Himself takes form. This causes self elimination and self absorbance in God. It is impossible to show the existence of God through logic and rational proof. Philosophy and revelation will not satisfy people who are in danger for losing their faith and belief. The reality we call God is located outside the area of senses perception and logical thought, hence, knowledge and metaphysics cannot prove and destroy the existence of God (Allah). Al Ghazali creates a non-erasable impression in Islam. Moslems is no longer assuming that God is the creator as well as others whose existence can be proven scientifically or philosophically[22]

g. God according to Abu al-Walid Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Rushd (1126-1198M)

Ibn Rushd is a famous Aristotle's commentator that makes western people owe him something. Why is it not? His merits are the reason that the fundamental works of Aristotle begins to be studied in western countries, that later on brings western toward its rise and takes the lead in the fields of thought like what we see nowadays. Ibn Rushd tries to unite the more traditional Islamic religiosity with Aristotle's philosophy. He is certain that there is no contradiction at all between religion and rationalism. Both of them express the similar truth in a different way and perceive the similar God. Yet, none of them is able to think philosophically that philosophy becomes limited only for a small group of intellectual elite[23]

Ibn Rushd warns that revelation and philosophy may endanger the people who are not capable of thinking philosophically. For those whom are not able to think philosophically but force themselves to it has not reached the real philosophy and give people wrong and slanted ideas so that they are involved in a discussion they thought as rational, while they are not. Consequently, he only forces the difference of opinion about teaching that have no advantages that will only weaken the faith of an uneducated person and make them feel anxious.

Ibn Rushd believes that the acceptance of a certain truth is so important for safety, a new point of view in Islam. The philosophers are the first authorities in their teaching. They are the only one who can interpret the holly book and are the people described in Al-Qur'an as "the one who has deep root of knowledge." Other people will perceive Al-Qur'an only on the surface and read it literally only. On the contrary, philosophers are able to give symbolic explanation although they need to follow the "credo" of obligated teaching, they are[24]

1. The existence of God as the creator and the pillar of the world
2. God the only one
3. The characteristics of knowledge, power, will, hearing, sight and speech given to God in the Al-Qur'an
4. The unity and incomparable of God that is clearly mentioned in Al-Qur'an 42:9 "Nothing and no one compares to Him."
5. The creation of the world by God
6. The prophecy validity
7. God's justice
8. Human rise in the judgment day

"*In toto*" must accept the teaching of God as well as stated in the Al Qur'an. Although Al-Qur'an clearly stated that God creates the world, yet it does not explain how He does it or whether this world is created in a certain time in a period. Undoubtedly, Ibn Rushd confronts the philosopher when he said that God knows everything we do. He does not accept the difference made by Ibn Sina about essence and existence. According to him, those differences are only verbal and made by people for analysis purpose, but do not show a real difference. Like Aristotle, he does not believe in the eternal soul. All that are still alive after the death of the physical body are active intellectual, united with Godness intellectual or world ratio. Referring to the different group of people, he states that most people live with their imagination, not with their ratio. Religion is very much needed by these people..

Conclusion

Understanding of God is not free from the general view that occurs in the era when the philosophers live. Innovation and emerge of original ideas relate to the concept of God resulted by the philosophers also influence the view of all communities in the era where the philosopher lives and for the era afterward. How philosophy is never dry of speculations that result new ideas, including the ideas related to Godly virtues. In this sense, philosophy is the soul of the era's spirit.

Human understanding over something, especially fundamental one, is formed due to the influence of human thought called philosopher. The speculation done by the philosopher is still humane, only that it is able to reach beyond humane borders, even if this border is difficult to state. Something a human most capable to do is reflecting through himself, because however good or bad his condition is, he must think of him as the best. Anthromorphism is not a weird and absurd thing for human. Thus, it is normal if a Sufi in the Greek's era stated that "if a horse could draw, he would draw God as he draw his own image,"

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